

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 29, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Ambassador Lighthizer
Office of the United States Trade
Representative
600 17th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Ross and Ambassador Lighthizer:

We are writing to bring to your attention the distress of the U.S. lobster industry as it attempts to remain competitive in the wake of the provisional implementation of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). We request your consideration and immediate assistance.

Provisional implementation of CETA will immediately reduce tariffs to zero on live Canadian lobster and phase in over three and five years, respectively, tariff elimination for frozen and processed Canadian lobster. We are deeply concerned about the impacts of those tariff reductions on the Maine lobster industry, which depends on the mature European market for approximately 15 to 20 percent of its global annual lobster trade. Lobster is Maine's top export, generating well over \$1.5 billion in total economic impact for the state in 2016.

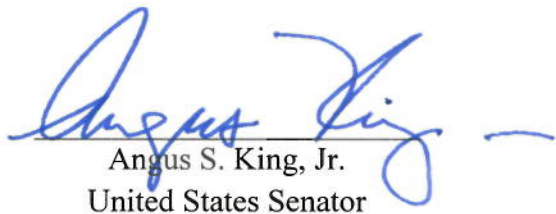
We are also concerned with a provision in the agreement that could interrupt the decades-old flow of lobster across Maine's northern and eastern borders. Though much of the lobster harvested in Maine is exported to and processed in Canada, that long-standing integration of the markets is not reflected in CETA. Instead, the agreement sets a quota on the amount of U.S. lobster that can be exported to Canada and continue to qualify for preferential tariff treatment, which could cut off another important market for Maine's lobster industry. It is vital that we support the efforts of the U.S. lobster industry to access new consumers and markets overseas.

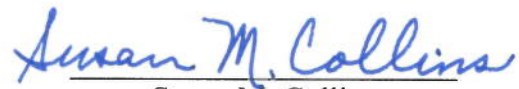
We urge you to engage in immediate efforts to help ensure that an industry as iconic as the U.S. lobster industry is given the opportunity to continue to flourish.

Thank you for your time and effort in this regard and please reach out to Lauren Pfingstag at Lauren_Pfingstag@king.senate.gov, Michael DiRoma at

Michael DiRoma at DiRoma@collins.senate.gov, Evan Johnston at Evan.Johnston@mail.house.gov, and Philip Swartzfager at Philip.Swartzfager@mail.house.gov with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator


Susan M. Collins
United States Senator


Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress


Bruce Poliquin
Member of Congress